WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE WITHIN THE GENERAL EDUCATION CLASSROOM

- Who are they and what do I do with them, now that they are in my school/classroom???

CHARACTERISTICS

- A variety of feelings which have been displayed over a long period of time:
  - Sad

  - Angry

  - Anxious

Characteristics continued:

- Worried

- Fearful

- Concerned that they are not in control of their minds or behavior

- Difficulty trusting adults appropriately (either too much or too little)

Characteristics continued:

- **<u>Outward manifestations of Depressive Disorders, Anxiety-related disorders, and Post-traumatic Stress Disorders</u>:**

    - Poor concentration/short attention span/impulsiveness
    - Difficulty making decisions
    - Compulsive behaviors
    - Nightmares or night terrors
    - Lack of interest in previously enjoyed activities

Characteristics continued:

- Sudden downturn in school performance
- Dramatic shifts in sleeping and eating patterns
- Avoidance of friends or family members
- Little or no displayed concern about the rights or feelings of others.
- Aggressive/self-injurious behaviors.
- Poor coping skills
- Temper tantrums

Characteristics continued:

- <u>Bipolar Disorder</u>:

  - Serious manifestations include distorted thinking, excessive anxiety, bizarre motor acts, and abnormal mood swings.

Legal educational definition:

- A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics **over a long period of time, across settings,** and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

Legal educational definition con't:

a). An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.

b). An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers.

c). Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.

Legal educational definition:

d). A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.

e). A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems

MENTAL HEALTH/Diagnostic Statistical Manual, IV ed. (DSM IV)

- Clinical criteria differs from educational criteria;

- Individuals diagnosed with a DSM IV diagnosis may <u>not</u> meet the educational criteria of having an Emotional Disturbance and vice versa.

Emotional Disturbance or Social Maladjustment?? Not the same!!!

- Important to distinguish in a child's behavior whether it is due to an emotionally-based disorder (mood disorders) or a personality disorder.

- <u>Personality Disorders include</u>:
    - antisocial personality disorder
    - borderline personality disorder
    - obsessive-compulsive disorder
    - paranoid personality disorder
- (DSM IV category)

Emotional Disturbance or Social Maladjustment?? con't:

- <u>Mood disorders include</u>:
  - bipolar disorders
  - depressive disorders
  - post-partum

  (DSM IV category).

- **A thorough evaluation consisting of many diverse assessments conducted by experienced school psychologists can help make this distinction.**

What does it look like when you are interacting with a student with ED?

- There are unpredictable mood shifts during conversations;
- They can be volatile, especially when confronted with others' feelings or perspectives;
- It's hard to get the individual to shift from "grievance";
- They have little ability to take perspective;
- They seem to not be "connecting" with you;

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS

- GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS:

  - Classroom behavior support system, presented visually, such as a wall chart , which clearly states the teacher's behavioral expectations and consequences.

  - General education teacher co-teaching with Special Education teacher in subject areas where the student needs academic support.

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS

- GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS con't:

  - System of self-regulation for the student to monitor own behavior such as individual behavior charts

  - Time-away space within the classroom for the student to use for "breaks"

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS

- GENERAL EDUCATION SETTINGS con't:

  - Teach social skills and organization skills as part of the curriculum.

  View maladaptive/problematic behaviors as skills deficits.

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS:

- Resource Room Support Services:

  - Resource teacher should adapt and adjust academic work, with consultation with general education teacher

  - Provide structured behavior support system for the student to use in the general education classrooms.

CLASSROOM SUPPORTS:

- Resource Room Support Services con't:

  - Curriculum should include organization skills and teaching social rules, norms and relationship-building strategies, e.g.,
    - Problem Solving Curriculum, e.g. "Second Step"
    - Conflict Resolution

KEY AXIOMS:

1. Avoid Power Struggles

2. Maintain Positive Communications and Actions.

3. Know and Teach to Students' Learning Styles.

KEY AXIOMS:

4. Teach Emotional Competencies such as coping skills, self-regulation and assertiveness.

5. Teach Behavior and Social Skills.

- These last two should be imbedded within the curriculum. They can be taught within the context of social studies, health, or communication.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:
  - <u>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT:</u>

  - 1. Classroom-wide behavior support system that teaches the desired, expected behaviors in clear, descriptive language. This system should encourage students to be responsible for their own behavior.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:
    - <u>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT con't:</u>

    - 2. Classroom-wide positive reinforcement system that reinforces the student when they display expected behaviors immediately and meaningfully. This system should include clear language on what will happen when the desired behaviors are not exhibited. Consequences are consistently applied.

- **IN OTHER WORDS, Dos AND Don'ts of student behavior!**
- Don't forget: focus on the behaviors, not the personality of the students, when providing feedback.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:
  - <u>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT con't:</u>

  - 3. A predictable, daily schedule that includes movement times, other than P.E. As little as 10 minutes of jogging a day can significantly reduce behavior problems in the classroom.

  - 4. Smooth and efficient transitions

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:

    - <u>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT con't:</u>

    - 5. Visual cues that provide reminders of expectations and procedures.

    - 6. Materials that are available for each student's ability level.

    - 7. Seating should be arranged so that teacher has visual access to all students in the classroom.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:

    - <u>ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT con't:</u>

    - 8. Have a place within the classroom designated at the ED student's "calming area": a study carrel, or a private area with a desk that has sensory materials that have been determined to be soothing to the student.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS:

- A. Organization systems:

  - ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT con't:

  - 9. A break room if the student's behavior is escalating and it is appropriate for the student to remain with the general education classroom (refer to handout about the effective use of Time-outs). There is a need for administration support so that this room can be staffed when necessary. Support Staff should have participated in Pro-Act training.

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS CONTINUED:

- B. Communication Styles:

    - 1. Neutral voice

    - 2. Neutral affect

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS CONTINUED:

- **B. Communication Styles:**

  - 3. Defusing potential conflicts:

    - a). Keep your temper
    - b). Focus on the behavior
    - c). Restate expected/desired behaviors

KEY QUALITY INDICATORS CONTINUED:

- d). Stay calm!!

- e). Use support staff and/or alternate settings to help calm student. (See handout about the use of "Time Out").

- f). Take a break.

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KQI CONTINUED:

- C. <u>CURRICULUM STRATEGIES</u>: The use of one or more of these strategies should be incorporated in the daily curriculum.

  - 1. <u>10-R Technique</u>: Prosocial Response Formation Technique, developed by Patrick Sloss, to assist in the control and change of aggressive or non-compliant behaviors. (Refer to handout)

KQI CONTINUED:

- C. <u>CURRICULUM STRATEGIES con't</u>:

  - 2. <u>Social Stories/Power Cards:</u> Use to teach new ways of responding to distressing situations, in story or comic strip format.

KQI CONTINUED:

- C. <u>CURRICULUM STRATEGIES con't:</u>

  - 3. <u>Formal Social Skills Training and Affective Education:</u>

    - Provide direct instruction on specific content areas such as positive social interactions, problem solving strategies, identification of feelings, coping strategies, self-regulation and improving communication skills.

KQI CONTINUED:

- D. <u>SPECIFIC TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USEFUL</u>:

  - 1. Specify the steps that are involved in the target skills.
  - 2. Model target skill, provide opportunities for practice and generalization.
  - 3. Provide feedback/reinforcement consistently.

KQI CONTINUED:

- SPECIFIC TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE USEFUL con't:

    - 4. Use cooperative learning strategies (exercise care when creating cooperative groups that include the ED student).

    - 5. Whenever possible, teach specific skills in the settings in which they will be needed.

KQI CONTINUED:

- <u>Specific teaching strategies that can be useful con't</u>:
  - 6. Incorporate functional skills into academic curriculum.
  - 7. Indicate relevancy to students when teaching new skills. Make the link between knowledge and skills taught inside school and application to outside life.

KQI CONTINUED:

- <u>Specific teaching strategies con't</u>:
  - 8. Address career and vocational awareness from early elementary grades.
  - 9. Help the ED student learn to behave and to successfully navigate in the world of interpersonal relationships, education and employment by providing models, access to learning specific skills and clear, consistent feedback.

TWO POINTS TO REMEMBER AND CARRY WITH YOU:

1. Like all our students, students with ED will strive to work for someone with whom they have a positive and nurturing relationship.
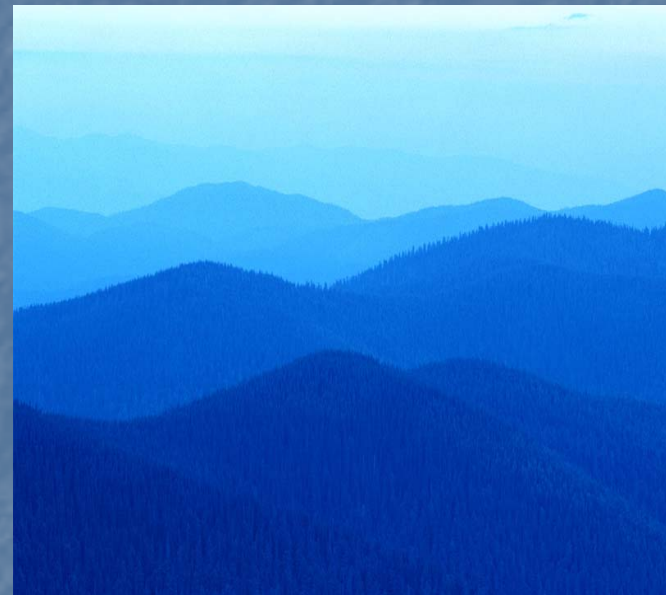
TWO POINTS TO REMEMBER AND CARRY WITH YOU:

2. All students deserve a chance to learn. All students deserve the chance to live fulfilled lives. Some need more of our skills, compassion, patience and heart than others. They are all our kids!
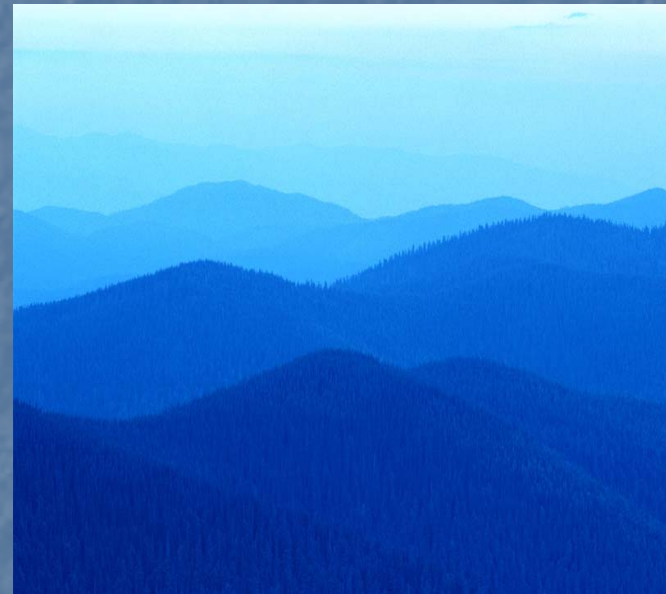
Establishing rules in the classroom

- 1. Create classroom rules with the students to increase ownership.
- 2. Limit the classroom rules to 5 or 6.
- 3. Keep rules simple and explicit: use direct language when writing rules.
- 4. State rules positively.
- 5. Establish common rules across classrooms.

Common sense school-wide rules:

- The High Fives:
  - Be respectful
  - Be responsible
  - Hands and feet to self
  - Follow directions
  - Be there and be ready